



Beautiful Attitudes

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Title Page

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13 Lessons

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Lesson One

“The Blessed Life”

INTRODUCTION

- 1) This study will be on twelve different “Beatitudes” in the Bible.
- 2) Matthew’s account of Jesus’ teachings has eight “beautiful attitudes.”
- 3) Four more will be added to this eight that are found elsewhere in the Bible.
- 4) We have entitled this study “Beautiful Attitudes” because that is what they are!
- 5) The first lesson will be introductory.
- 6) Read Matt. 5:1-12

QUESTIONS FOR CLASS DISCUSSION:

1. Is the Sermon on the Mount a compilation by Matthew of Jesus’ teachings done at different places?

- a) Not necessarily
- b) He could have actually delivered this series at one time.
- c) And yet...other places have these sayings divided up more.
- d) It is obvious that Matthew does groupings in his writings to give an overall summary of things.
- e) Very possible that Jesus said the same thing many times—more or less in different locations.

2. Are these teachings new?

- a) Ps. 18:25; 37:11; 40:17
- b) Prov. 16:19; 25:8-9, etc.
- c) Jesus had a unique way of pulling a lot together.

3. What is new about these principles?

- a) The way they are grouped together in one grand presentation.
- b) They help show the things that contribute to man’s happiness.
- c) What men have said about these principles:
 - 1) *“Magna Charta of Christianity”*
 - 2) *“Central document of Christian Faith”*
 - 3) *“Living Law of New Kingdom”*
 - 4) *“Code of Christian Discipleship”*

4. Are there 7 or 8 Beatitudes?

- a) Difference of opinion.
- b) Some suggest that 7 is the complete number.
- c) Some suggest that the one that ends with ‘persecution’ in reality is looking back to the other 7 who possess these characteristics.

5. What does the word “Beatitude” come from?

- a) Latin, “Beatus”
- b) There are at least 100 statements in the Bible that begin with “Blessed” (KJV).
(Ps. 1:1; Rev. 22:14)
- c) The word occurs some 600 times in KJV of Bible.
 - 1) *The Bible is a book of blessings*
 - 2) *The Beatitudes here are just the heart of those blessings.*

6. What was the original meaning of the Greek word, “Makar?”

- a) Makarious—blessed, happy state.
- b) In the New Testament—A state of spiritual and moral prosperity & blessedness.
- c) The highest possible happiness man can enjoy in this life.
- d) The concept shows....”The truly blessed is the one who is committed to God.”
 - 1) *Because he is the blessed of God.*
 - 2) *Because God is the blessed One! 1 Tim. 1:11; 6:15*

7. Where is such blessedness found?

- a) In Christ. (Eph. 1:3)
- b) This blessedness does not depend upon outward circumstances.
- c) It depends upon being in a right relationship with God.
- d) In Christ...we have that right relationship...and thus enjoy the mastery of life.
 - 1) *Jn. 16:33*
 - 2) *Ps. 32:10-11*
- e) If outward circumstances determined happiness, the Apostle Paul would have been miserable.
 - 1) *Stripped of wealth, fame and power.*
 - 2) *Sufferings, deprivations, sorrows, trials.*
 - 3) *But he wasn't miserable.*
 - 4) *Never expressed regret in becoming a Christian.*
 - 5) *In Christ he enjoyed:*
 - Forgiveness
 - Peace of Mind
 - Approval of God
 - Hope of glory.
 - 6) *Phil. 4:11-13*

8. Where does the world expect to find this blessedness?

- a) They seek it thru:
 - 1) Circumstances, not thru character.
 - 2) Self-seeking, not surrender to God.
 - 3) Carnal means, not spiritual means.

- b) But they also seek it in:
 - 1) Immoral actions
 - 2) Drugs & Drink
 - 3) Material possessions
 - 4) Power, popularity, praise.
- c) Americans are expecting to find happiness in a certain standard of living, not a standard of character.
- d) Results:
 - 1) Our society is reflecting more and more problems.
 - 2) They laughed at Jesus' teachings and miss what they sought for.
 - 3) They congratulated the Mellon's and Rockefeller's, not the Peter's and Paul's.
- e) Happiness must rest in what a person is, not what he has.

9. Has the church failed to get this message, too?

- a) We can stress:
 - 1) *Avoiding all compromise with error.*
 - 2) *Keeping pure in doctrine and practice.*
 - 3) *Not letting false teachers get into our midst.....*
 - 4) *All of which is good and right!*
- b) But, then allow the greatest error of all....
 - 1) *To teach that happiness depends on what we have rather than on what we are.*
 - 2) *We can fight against modernism and sectarianism, and allow materialism to destroy us.*
- c) Our pride is not in our relationship to God, but in our nice A/C church building and well-to-do people.

CONCLUSION

- 1) Wherein lies your happiness?

Lesson Two

“Blessed Are the Poor in Spirit”INTRODUCTION

- 1) Pride was basic in the fall of man in the Garden!
 - a) He assumed that he was self-sufficient to make decisions independent of the Will of God.
 - b) Man thought that he, rather than God, knew what was best for him.
 - c) They fell into the same snare that the Devil did—pride!
- 2) Humility is essential in man’s return to God.
 - a) The reason is—Man must renounce the idea that he is self-sufficient.
 - b) Thus, the first beatitude is basic to all the others.
 - c) **“Blessed are the Poor in Spirit.”**

QUESTIONS FOR CLASS DISCUSSION:**1. What are the two usages for the words “poor” or “poverty?”**

- a) The poor who lacked wealth—whose life was a struggle.
 - 1) *James 2:1-4; 5:1-4*
 - 2) *Matt. 26:9-11*
 - 3) *The poor who were destitute! Abject poverty!*
 - 4) *Those who were in imminent danger of real starvation.*
 - 5) *They had no man to whom they could look.*
 - 6) *They could only look to God in some instances.*
- b) Those who are spiritually poor—using “poor” in a figurative sense!
 - 1) *We believe Jesus was using this last concept in this beatitude!*
 - 2) *Those who are spiritual beggars.*
 - 3) *Those who have abandoned pride and a sense of self-sufficiency in knowledge and righteousness.*
 - 4) *They are spiritually bankrupt—and know and acknowledge it.*
 - 5) *They realize that God and He alone can meet their spiritual needs.*
 - 6) *They are then willing to seek to do God’s will, not their own.*
 - 7) *Matt. 6:33*

2. Is there a difference between “pride” and “self-respect?”

- a) A basic need of human beings is to have a sense of self-respect.
- b) The 2nd great command would seem to show this: **“You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”** (Matt. 22:39).
 - 1) *Without love of self, how would we know to show love for others?*
 - 2) *Love of self is not selfishness or self-centeredness!*
 - 3) *“Poverty of spirit” helps us to deal with such—and not be proud and arrogant.*
- c) Pride is the opposite—it is an effort on man’s part to dethrone God and enthrone himself.

- 1) *God has no desire to take away man's self-respect or self-worth!*
- 2) *He even uses terms that help to build such—after we have humbled ourselves before Him (1 Peter 2:5, 9-10; James 4:6-10).*

3. Why is pride such a problem for human beings?

- a) Jesus was born in the midst of a world of proud people.
 - 1) *The Jews were proud of their physical relationship to Abraham (Matt. 3:7-12).*
 - 2) *The Pharisees trusted in themselves that they were righteous and set others at naught (Lk. 18:9-14).*
 - 3) *The Greeks were proud of their own "wisdom"—thinking that they were sufficient to guide their own lives.*
 - They had a sense of self-sufficiency in their own knowledge.
 - The Stoics illustrated this.
 - 4) *Jesus came to make known God's will....and most of the above were not interested in what He had to say.*
- b) Today...we live in a world much the same!
 - 1) *The pride of man underlies his rejection of Jesus.*
 - 2) *Quote: "For myself I do not need this belief and I would regard it as an affront to my dignity as a human being to put my faith in something supernatural."*
 - 3) *But without God....man is but just another animal.*
 - 4) *Deep pride underlies the philosophies of Atheism and Materialism.*
 - 5) *Darwinism was accepted by so many because it appealed to the pride of man.*
 - It allowed man to be his own God.
 - It took away his sense of guilt.
 - It says that there is no eternal moral standard.
 - And therefore, he is not responsible for his own conduct.
 - 6) *1 John 2:15*
- c) Also, there are those who are proud of their own moral goodness.
 - 1) *They think that is sufficient to be right with God.*
 - 2) *There is no poverty of spirit—nor recognition of their need of the Grace of God.*

4. What is the danger of "false humility?"

- a) "False humility" is to put on a front of being "poor of spirit," but when the true self comes out—it is a spirit of pride!
- b) Such is a poor example of the real thing!
- c) It causes people to think they are acceptable to God when they are not.
- d) This is the reason for such admonitions as: Phil. 2:3-11; Rom. 12:9).
- e) It is to be outwardly religious—but religiously wrong.
- f) The Devil has devised substitutes for man to follow.
 - 1) *God sent apostles & prophets—the Devil has sent his (2 Cor. 12)*
 - 2) *God gave us the Bible, the book of truth—The devil spawned books that claim to be of God.*

3) *God calls for true humility—the devil has devised false humility.*

4) *False humility claims:*

- We are not worthy to approach God...must go thru angels, “saints”, the Mother of Jesus, etc. (Col. 2:18-19).
- But the Bible says we can have direct approach to God thru His Son. (Heb. 2:17-18; 4:14-16; Col. 2:23)

5) *False humility claims:*

- We can't arrive at truth—God is not smart enough to give us a book we can understand!
- Since we are not smart enough to understand the Bible—we are excused from needing to try to understand.
- Some are “so humble” that they cannot do anything in service to Christ—but when some simple job is shown—they are unwilling to do it.

6) *Some are even proud of their humility.*

5. How would you identify true humility (poverty of spirit)?

a) It is to recognize that we are the creatures created by God—we are not God.

- 1) *That we are unable to stand justified before God on our own merit.*
- 2) *That we are not self-sufficient in knowledge or wisdom.*
- 3) *It is not to be self-willed, self-seeking, nor self-glorying.*

b) It is to accept God as the one whom we supremely trust, love, and serve.

- 1) *We know that our faith must be expressed in obedience to God.*
- 2) *But our efforts do not earn or merit our justification (Tit. 3:4-7).*

6. What is the “blessing” that comes from such a beautiful attitude?

a) ***“Theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”***

- 1) *Such are qualified for entrance into the kingdom.*
- 2) *They have the right attitude that will lead them into the kingdom.*

b) It is not a kingdom of pomp & pride—but a spiritual kingdom.

- 1) *Matt. 5 & Matt. 23 stand in sharp contrast to one another.*
- 2) *The poor of spirit enter the kingdom.*
- 3) *The self-righteous do not—woe to such.*

CONCLUSION

1. We need to continually cultivate a “poverty of spirit” before God and man.

2. It is done by:

- a) Seeing ourselves before the holiness of God (Isa. 6:1-6).
- b) Realizing how far we fall below perfection (Matt. 5:48; Rom. 3:23).
- c) Deeply realizing our need of the continual cleansing by God (1 John 1:7).

Lesson Three

“Blessed Are Those Who Mourn”INTRODUCTION

1. Jesus taught in different ways:
 - a) In order to not only get the people’s attention;
 - b) But to also instruct them in such a way that they would remember the message.
2. An example:
 - a) **“Lay not up for yourselves treasure on earth....., but lay up treasure in heaven.”**
(Matt. 6:19-20).
 - b) A statement like this goes against what we see as necessary!
 - c) But, it gets your attention!
 - d) It makes you think—if you are concerned about your relationship to God.
3. Jesus did this in the sermon on the mount as He contrasted things:
 - a) **“You have heard.....”**
 - b) **“But I say unto you....”**
 - c) It got their attention “plenty good!” (Matt. 7:28-29).
4. Our 2nd “beautiful attitude” is: **“Blessed are those who mourn.”**
 - a) From experience, we know that people who mourn are generally sad—not happy!
 - b) But Jesus is pronouncing a blessing upon those who mourn!

QUESTIONS FOR CLASS DISCUSSION:**1. What kind of “mourners” does Jesus have in mind?**

- a) It would be obvious that He is not talking about those who “mourn” or “suffer” because of their own misdeeds.
 - 1) *1 Peter 4:15; Galatians 6:7-8*
 - 2) *Much sadness or unhappiness comes into people’s lives because of engaging in the wrong activities that bring undesirable consequences—to say the least!*
- b) It would seem to be referring to those who mourn over their rebellious sins against God and their fellow-man—as well as their unworthiness before God.
 - 1) *The first few beatitudes are calling for a deep inward attitude and reaction to some obvious facts.*
 - 2) *The “poor in spirit” humbly recognize their true condition before God.*
 - 3) *This hopefully will be followed by a reaction internally over that condition.*
- c) Only those who mourn over their sinful, lost condition have a promise of blessedness.
 - 1) *2 Corinthians 7:10*
 - 2) *Acts 2:23, 38, 41, 46-47*
 - 3) *Acts 17:30-31*

2. Over what did Jesus mourn or weep?

- a) It is indicated only two times in the New Testament: John 11:31-35; Luke 19:37-44.
- b) John 11:31-35 states that Jesus wept at the tomb of Lazarus.

- 1) *But Jesus knew that He would raise Lazarus back to life!*
- 2) *Then, why weep?*
- 3) *Was it because of the sadness sin had brought into the lives of humans?*
- 4) *Did He weep because of the weeping of those He cared about?*
- c) Luke 19:37-44 states that Jesus wept over the city (people in the city?).
 - 1) *Why would He weep over them?*
 - 2) *He knew what their disobedience to God would bring into their lives.*
 - 3) *He had compassion or concern for them—but they would not listen!*
 - 4) *It is good and right to weep over the plight of others (Rom. 12:15).*
 - It is to feel what they feel.
 - It is to identify with them in their situation.
- d) But these are not what Jesus is speaking about in Matthew 5:4.
- e) It is our weeping over our sinful and rebellious condition before God.

3. How can one be mournful and also rejoice?

- a) There is a lot of emphasis upon the Christian rejoicing! (Phil. 4:4).
 - 1) *Even in the midst of trials (James 1:2-4).*
 - 2) *And in the midst of persecution (Matthew 5:12).*
- b) But, these passages are talking about a Christian—not one outside of Christ!
 - 1) *The Christian has something to rejoice about—no matter what comes his way.*
 - 2) *Matt. 5:12—“Rejoice and be exceedingly glad.”*

4. Is mourning an “end” in itself?

- a) No!
- b) There is an outcome from mourning that brings reasons for rejoicing.
- c) Mourning for one’s sinful condition turns into joy in the “act of forgiveness” from God.
- d) Without forgiveness—there is no joy connected with mourning!
- e) Jesus found joy even in going to the cross! (Heb. 12:2).

5. What is the blessedness of mourning?

- a) It is the assurance of forgiveness!
- b) It is the comfort of being right with God. (1 John 3:7, 10; 5:13)
- d) Example:
 - 1) *Bad tasting medicine can bring a cure.*
 - 2) *A rough surgery and all its dangers, etc., can help to save a life.*
- e) Spiritually—we need to face up to our true condition before God.
 - 1) *It may not be easy or pleasant.*
 - 2) *But the willingness to see or to be shown our true condition can bring joy in the finding of assurance before God! (Hebrews 12:5-11)*

CONCLUSION

1. Have we faced up to our true condition before God?
2. Have we enjoyed the comfort that comes from God?

Lesson Four

“Blessed Are the Meek”INTRODUCTION

1. One of the challenges in communicating with one another is to use words that are clear in their meaning and message.
 - a) This is one of the problems with the old King James Version of the Bible.
 - b) It has quite a few archaic words whose meanings have changed—thus requiring a continual update of that translation.
 - c) One of the purposes of newer translations or versions is to make it easier to understand words that are used.
2. Sometimes it is hard to translate a word in the Hebrew or Greek into English by just one word.
 - a) The reason is that words often take on new meaning when used in a different context.
 - b) This is especially true with the Bible and such could be illustrated over and over.
 - c) While our English translations use different words to translate the Hebrew and Greek words for “meekness,” it is strongly felt that there is no one word that will do the job sufficiently.
 - d) Following are some words used to describe the concept of “meekness”:
 - 1) *Gentleness*
 - 2) *Humility*
 - 3) *Easy or Mild*
 - 4) *A soothing disposition....etc.*
 - e) It seems to be obvious that the Bible use of this term does not have the same connotation as it does in its common usage among the Greeks in particular.
 - 1) *Their idea is that of “weakness” or “spineless gentleness.”*
 - 2) *While the Bible’s usage seems to be more of strength than weakness and more of determination than spinelessness.*
3. “Meekness” has been used to identify some of the greatest men of the Bible—and most important of all—Jesus, the Son of God!
4. In order to get a good grasp of the meaning of this word “meekness” it is important to see to whom this word is applied and in what kind of situations.
5. It is also important to realize: **“Blessed are the MEEK!”**

QUESTIONS FOR CLASS DISCUSSION**1. How is the word “Meekness” used in the Bible?**

- a) How it is not used!
 - 1) *It is not weakness, spinelessness, sentimental fondness, nor passive “quietism” as one writer puts it.*
 - 2) *Some words closely identified with “Meekness” may help to see what it is not, such as: Humility, Gentleness, Self-Control, Mildness, and a Soothing Disposition.*
 - 3) *But it is strongly felt that no one of these terms fully captures the concept of*

“Biblical Meekness.”

- b) It will help to see how the term is used in Scripture:
- 1) *Ps. 25:9—The meek are teachable.*
 - 2) *Ps. 76:9—God delivers the meek.*
 - 3) *Ps. 147:6—The Lord lifts the meek up.*
 - 4) *Ps. 149:4—The Lord will beautify the meek.*
 - 5) *Num. 12:3—Moses was very meek above all men on earth.*
 - 6) *Zeph. 2:3—God’s people are to seek righteousness and meekness.*
 - 7) *Matt. 11:29—Jesus calls Himself meek and lowly.*
 - 8) *Matt. 21:5—Jesus is identified as meek in a quote from Zeph. 9:9.*
 - 9) *Matt. 5:5—Meekness is listed as one of the Beatitudes.*
 - 10) *Gal. 5:23—Meekness is listed as one of the fruits of the Spirit.*
 - 11) *Titus 3:2—Christians are to show gentleness and meekness to all (showing every consideration to men)..*
 - 12) *1 Cor. 4:21; Gal. 6:1; 2 Tim. 2:25—The spiritually strong are to strive to help both the erring as well as the arrogant in a spirit of meekness.*
 - 13) *James 1:21—Men should receive the Word of God with meekness.*
 - 14) *1 Pet. 3:4—A meek spirit is highly favored by God.*
 - 15) *Eph. 4:1-3—The UNITY of God’s people is to be maintained in a spirit of meekness, gentleness, and tolerance.*
 - 16) *Col. 3:12-14—God’s people are challenged to put on a heart of compassion, meekness, gentleness and patience—along with bearing with one another, forgiving one another, and in a loving spirit (which is the perfect bond of unity).*

2. What is a general definition of meekness?

- a) An attitude and frame of mind that is shown by correct actions towards others.
- b) It is the spirit with which we accept God’s dealings with us as good without dispute or resisting.
- c) A willingness to be mistreated by evil men realizing that it is a chastening and purifying of one’s soul (Matt. 5:39-41; James 5:6).
- d) Meekness is the opposite of self-assertiveness and self-interest—as well as arrogance and pride!
- e) One who is under the control, restraint, and guidance of God in all he does.
- f) Meekness is identified as one having great strength, power, or authority, but uses it only for the good of others.
- g) It could be defined as persistent patience and gentleness in the face of opposition from men and events (1 Peter 2:21-22).
- h) Quote: ***“It is when we have meekness that we can treat all men with perfect courtesy, that we can rebuke without rancor, that we can argue without intolerance, that we can face the truth without resentment, that we can be angry and yet sin not, that we can be gentle and yet not weak.”***
- i) Quote: ***“O the bliss of the man who is always angry at the right time and never angry at the wrong time; who has every instinct, and impulse, and passion under control, because he himself is God-controlled; who has the humility to realize his own***

ignorance and his own weakness—for such a man is a king among men!”

3. What are some examples that help define “meekness?”

a) Moses:

- 1) *He had position and power from God as a leader of God’s people.*
- 2) *Yet, it did not go to his head.*
- 3) *Nor did he use such to run roughshod over God’s people.*
- 4) *He was gentle, patient, and longsuffering with the people of Israel.*
- 5) *But he could speak out strongly against the rebellious ones (Exo. 32:15-35).*

b) Jesus:

- 1) *He had position and power from God as the “Son of God!”*
- 2) *Yet, he acted generally as a humble and gentle person towards all men.*
- 3) *He did not use his position or power to mistreat anyone (2 Cor. 10:1).*
- 4) *Instead, He allowed Himself to be mistreated and even crucified.*
- 5) *Yet, at the same time He could cleanse the Temple of its abuses and abusers (John 2:13-17).*
- 6) *His greatest example of meekness was shown by His submission to the Father’s Will—even unto death itself (John 8:29).*

c) Paul:

- 1) *He was an Apostle—chosen by Christ.*
- 2) *And yet, he was meek and gentle in his actions with new Christians in particular (2 Cor. 10:1, 7-11).*
- 3) *He did not use his position or powers to harm, but to help others.*
- 4) *But he could speak out boldly or publicly rebuke those who needed it for their spiritual welfare (Gal. 2:3-5, 11-21).*

4. What is the promised blessing of the meek?

a) **“Shall inherit the earth.”**

- 1) *This is a quote from Ps. 37:11 with reference to the Israelites inheriting the land of Palestine.*
- 2) *To the Christian—this promise could be figurative!*
- 3) *“Inheriting the earth” could be representative of receiving the desired reward for faithful service to God.*
- 4) *“The new heavens and earth” are reserved for those who obey the Lord (2 Peter 3:13).*
- 5) **“How blessed are the gentle ones! They shall have a share in Messiah’s Kingdom.” (A. M. Hunter).**
- 6) *Some have understood this concept as literal—The meek are the one’s who actually inherit the earth!*

- b) Whatever the Reward—it is designed for those “God-controlled people” who are meek and lowly in heart like Jesus.

CONCLUSION

1. Is “meekness” on our list of things we “must do?”
2. There is no greater way to be like Jesus than becoming a meek person!

Lesson Five

“Blessed Are Those Who Hunger and Thirst After Righteousness”

INTRODUCTION

1. Man was created by God with needs, drives, passions such as: hunger, thirst, etc.
 - a) God has amply supplied the means of satisfying all of our needs.
 - b) However, there are times when these needs cannot be satisfied or cannot be satisfied correctly.
 - c) This calls for self-control on the part of the person until that need can be satisfied or satisfied correctly.
 - d) In some instances, it may be necessary to go a lifetime without satisfying some needs.
2. It is also obvious that some needs are stronger than others.
 - a) Among the stronger needs is food and drink.
 - b) One can live only for several days without water.
 - c) And he or she cannot live too much longer without food.
 - d) Our very survival upon this earth depends upon satisfying our hunger and thirst.
3. But Jesus also reminded us during His wilderness temptations that man is not only physical (with physical needs), but spiritual as well (with spiritual needs) (Matthew 4:4).
 - a) Man needs God and will not be content and at peace until he has built a relationship with God (Acts 17:26-28).
 - b) Man is therefore urged to seek God while He can be found (Isaiah 55:6).
 - c) For one to put God out of his life only leads to a disappointing downward spiral of one’s life (Romans 1:18-32).
 - d) The wise man stated by inspiration of God that the whole duty of man is to:
Eccl. 12:13
4. Man’s longing to be with God is seen in Paul’s inspired statement in 2 Cor. 5:1-5.
5. Man should set his affections (longings—primary interest) on things above where God is (Col. 3:1-2).
6. Man is encouraged to seek first God’s kingdom and righteousness (Matt. 6:33).
7. Thus, such a person that **“hungers and thirst after righteousness”** will be blessed!

QUESTIONS FOR CLASS DISCUSSION:

1. Does man have a choice in satisfying his physical appetites?
 - a) Yes!
 - 1) *We can curb it or satisfy it.*
 - 2) *We may satisfy it with good food or bad food.*
 - 3) *We may over-indulge or just eat sufficiently for our body’s needs.*
 - b) Man can also stop eating and die physically!
 - 1) *The basic desire is there.*
 - 2) *But man has to make the choice of whether to satisfy these needs or not.*

2. Does man have a choice in satisfying the spiritual needs of his soul?

- a) Yes!
 - 1) *Again, we can curb it or try to satisfy it.*
 - 2) *We may try to satisfy it with erroneous teachings that deceive us into believing we have a relationship with God when we do not (2 John 9; Galatians 1:6-9).*
 - 3) *Or, we can seek for truth that sets us free (John 8:32) and gives us promise of eternal life with God.*
- b) Our seeking must be after God’s righteousness—not man’s idea of righteousness (Romans 10:1-3).
 - 1) *Man’s idea of righteousness can be:*
 - *A perversion of God’s truth (Gal. 1:6-9);*
 - *Or, a rejection of Jesus as man’s only access to the Father (John 14:6).*
 - 2) *Today, man will seek in vain to become righteous before God if he rejects Jesus as Lord and Master.*

3. Can man starve his soul just like he can starves his physical body?

- a) Yes!
 - a) We can neglect feeding our soul the spiritual food it needs (Heb. 5:11-14).
 - b) We can become weak and sickly spiritually by not taking in proper spiritual food (1 Cor. 11:28-34).
 - c) Jesus made this very clear (Matt. 4:4).
- b) We survive spiritually by constantly feeding on the Word of God (Col. 2:6-10).

4. Why do Christians neglect to feed their soul as they should?

- a) **Matt. 13:20-21** _____
- b) **Matt. 13:22** _____
- c) **Matt. 25:26-30** _____
- d) **James 1:21-22** _____
- e) **1 Tim. 6:9-10** _____
- f) **Rev. 3:14-16** _____

5. How is Jesus involved in satisfying our spiritual hunger and thirst?

- a) **John 4:14-15** _____
- b) **John 6:27-29** _____
- c) **John 6:38** _____
- d) **John 6:51-55** _____
- e) **John 6:63** _____
- e) **Rev. 22:17** _____

6. How is the Word of God characterized in regards to spiritual hunger and thirst?

- a) **Psa. 19:10** _____
- b) **John 6:44-45** _____
- c) **1 Peter 2:1-3** _____
- d) **2 Peter 1:2-4** _____

e) 2 Peter 3:17-18 _____

f) Isa. 55:1-2 _____

7. What is the blessing promised to those who hunger and thirst after God's righteousness?

a) "Shall be filled!"

a) Satisfying to the soul (John 4:13-14).

b) Our souls will live and prosper (3 John 2-4)

b) "We reap what we sow!"

a) If we sow to the spirit—we reap life everlasting (Gal. 6:7-8).

b) If we sow to the flesh—we reap corruption!

CONCLUSION

1. We need to hunger and thirst after God's righteousness!
2. Or, we will lose our opportunity for eternal life!
3. What can we do to promote this hungering and thirsting?

Lesson Six

“Blessed Are the Merciful”

INTRODUCTION

1. Words generally have a general meaning and also at times will have an extended meaning.
 - a) This comes about because of the beginning use of the word had a specific thing in mind.
 - b) In time, men will give extended usages to the word as they search to find a word that is close to what they are trying to communicate.
2. It is possibly true with the word “merciful!”
 - a) The original concept of this word carried the idea of having compassion on the unfortunate. (Matt. 15:22; 17:15).
 - b) But the extended idea of this word is that of sparing of punishment for one who justly deserves it. (1 Peter 2:9-10).
3. It is also possible that Jesus could have had both of these concepts in mind in this beatitude:

“Blessed are the merciful!”

 - a) They are blessed who show compassion on the suffering or who forgive those who sin against them.
 - b) Jesus clearly showed both compassion for his creatures as well as the willingness to forgive (set aside just punishment for their actions) by becoming a man and dying on the cross in our place.

QUESTIONS FOR CLASS DISCUSSION:

1. To whom did Jesus show compassion and why in the following references?
 - a) Matt. 9:36 _____
 - b) Matt. 14:14 _____
 - c) Matt. 15:32 _____
 - d) Matt. 20:34 _____
2. What is said to be pure and undefiled religion? (James 1:27) _____
3. How did the early church show their compassion? (Acts 2:44-45; 4:32; 6:1-6) _____
4. Was one of the sins of Ananias and Sapphira a sin of not being compassionate? (Acts 5:1-11) _____
5. What will be one of the basis of judgment in the day of judgment as pictured by Jesus in

Matt. 25:31-46? _____

6. What is the lesson taught in Matthew 18:21-35? _____

7. Why is it so important for us to be merciful?
a) **Matt. 18:33-35** _____
b) **Matt. 6:14-15** _____

8. What purpose or value is it for us to hold a grudge or hate a person? _____

9. Who suffers when compassion or mercy is not shown? _____

10. What are we asking for when we fail to show mercy?
a) **Matt. 6:15** _____

11. How much should we be merciful?
a) **Matt. 18:21-22** _____

12. What helps to build relationships as much as anything?
a) **1 John 1:7** _____
b) **Titus 3:5** _____

13. What two examples have been given to us of extending mercy to the undeserving?
a) **Luke 23:34** _____
b) **Acts 7:60** _____

CONCLUSION

1. Only the compassionate will be saved!
2. We have no greater example of compassion or mercy than that shown by God!

Lesson Seven

“Blessed Are the Pure in Heart”INTRODUCTION

1. Purity is something we can all appreciate in so many ways.
 - a) We like clean houses to live in.
 - b) We like clean streets to drive on.
 - c) We like pure clean air to breathe—not polluted!
 - d) We like pure clean water to drink—not contaminated!
 - e) We generally like that which is pure—not that which is mixed!
2. The general idea of purity is:
 - a) That which is not mixed with something undesirable.
 - b) Or, that which is not mixed with that which will contaminate.
3. The varied usages of purity:
 - a) That which could be called absolute purity.
 - 1) *Only God is absolutely pure—free from sin—holy (1 Peter 1:15).*
 - b) That which has gone through a purifying process...but may not be 100% pure.
 - 1) *Gold refined by fire...but generally not 100% pure.*
 - 2) *The Old Testament purifying ceremonies (Heb. 9:22; 10:1-4).*
 - 3) *A child of God is cleansed, but not free of sin (1 Peter 1:22) in his life.*
 - c) That which we speak of as being pure in a general sense.
 - 1) *Moral and ethical purity, but not perfection (Acts 10:1-2, 6; 11:14)*
 - 2) *A person can possess this purity of heart whether a Christian or not.*
4. Jesus is here pronouncing a blessing on the “pure in heart!”

QUESTIONS FOR CLASS DISCUSSION:

1. **Can man’s heart be pure before he becomes a Christian?**
 - a) Evidently so...since these are attitudes that a person must possess in order to come to God and be acceptable unto Him.
 - b) It would not be a cleansed heart that a Christian would possess.
 - c) But it would be a heart that was sincerely seeking after God—wanting to know Him and to “see Him!”
 - d) A person who saw the value of a pure, undivided heart.
2. **Are there passages that show that man has control over what kind of heart he has?**
 - a) **Prov. 3:5** _____
 - b) **Prov. 4:23** _____
 - c) **Matt. 13:18-23** _____
 - d) **James 4:8** _____
 - e) **1 John 3:3** _____

3. What will help to cleanse our hearts of contamination?

- a) Psa. 19:8 _____
- b) Psa. 12:6 _____
- c) Psa. 119:140 _____
- d) 1 Peter 1:22-23 _____
- e) John 8:32 _____
- f) John 17:17 _____
- g) Rom. 12:2 _____

4. Why is it critical that the Word of God be not polluted by men?

- a) Gal. 1:6-9 _____
 - b) Col. 2:6-10 _____
- _____

5. What will help to keep our hearts pure?

- a) 1 John 1:6-7 _____
- b) Phil. 4:8 _____

6. What are some indications that our hearts are pure towards God?

- a) Matt. 22:37 _____
- b) Matt. 22:39 _____
- c) 1 John 2:15-17 _____
- d) Prov. 15:26 _____
- e) Matt. 6:24 _____
- f) 1 John 3:3 _____
- g) Acts 15:9 _____
- h) Col. 3:1-2 _____
- i) Gal. 5:16, 24-25 _____

7. What is said to be “pure religion?” (James 1:27) _____

8. What is the outcome of a pure heart?

- a) Psa. 24:3-4 _____
- b) Matt. 5:8 _____
 - 1) *To see God for what He really is—in the sense of enlightenment from the Word of God.*
 - This is in contrast to spiritual darkness of the heart.
 - Our hearts are willingly open to hear and to learn of the true God of heaven.
 - 2) *To see God—to come into a relationship with Him.*
 - John 3:3, 5—“see” and “enter” the kingdom.
 - See God—be acceptable in His presence.
 - Ps. 24:3—come into His presence!

3) *To see God—To be in God's presence forever in the next existence.*

- *To dwell together with God and the redeemed forever.*
- *Rev. 22:4—“They shall see His face....”*

CONCLUSION

1. Our first and major concern as humans is to keep our hearts undivided, unpolluted—open to hear the Word of God.
2. To have a willingness to come to God for cleansing of our hearts from sin & disobedience.
3. To keep it clean, pure, undivided—set on God and our goal of heaven some day!
4. To have a heart at peace with God!

Lesson Eight

“Blessed Are the Peacemakers”**INTRODUCTION**

1. “Peace, sweet Peace”—what a wonderful and desirable word!
2. Does everyone want, desire, or seek after peace?
 - a) Probably not!
 - b) But a large portion of mankind does appreciate peace in the sense of the absence of turmoil, fighting, or war-torn world.
3. It is interesting to notice God’s outlook concerning peace.
 - a) He offers to give peace to those who are His people—to those who live righteous lives. (Psa. 29:11).
 - b) But He refuses to give peace to those who are wicked (Isa. 48:22).
4. But God is not alone in offering peace to mankind.
 - a) Man can be a peacemaker!
 - b) He can be blessed by God because he is such!

QUESTIONS FOR CLASS DISCUSSION:**1. What kind of peace is under consideration in Matt. 5:9?**

a) John 14:27 _____

2. How does the peace that Jesus gives differ from the peace that the world gives?

- a) The world thinks of peace as being content—having no financial burdens, enjoying the company of family and friends in a leisurely life.
 - 1) *If this is all that peace means to mankind—it is only trying to withdraw from the challenges of living.*
 - 2) *This is more selfish desire than anything else—who wouldn’t want to escape the trials and tribulations of life.*
 - 3) *We have found that this is generally not a possibility for most of us.*
- b) Others think of peace as a compromise with the enemy.
 - 1) *This amounts to giving up the struggle.*
 - 2) *“Get rid of temptation by giving in to it!”*
 - 3) *“Peace at any price” usually winds up being slavery!*
- c) Some men do not want peace!
 - 1) *They want to keep things in an uproar—or people at each other’s throats.*
 - 2) *Often, men will force physical or spiritual conflict upon the Christian.*
 - It is not something that he wants or desires.
 - But he may have to fight in order to establish peace through defeat of error and unrighteousness (Eph. 6:13-18; Rom. 13:3-4).
- d) The peace that the Lord offers is more than:
 - 1) *The ceasing of hostilities with our enemies;*
 - 2) *The attitude of “live and let live;”*

- 3) *Or, just tolerating others in silence and indifference.*
- e) The Lord offers something possible, not just negative.
 - 1) *It is wishing for completeness and wholeness in a person's life and outlook.*
 - 2) *It involves that which makes for man's highest good.*

3. What kind of peace is Jesus speaking about in this "beautiful attitude?"

- a) Obviously, it is a peace that deals with relationships between human beings.
- b) It is not just talking about those who desire peace for themselves, but those who are concern for peace between individuals.
- c) This is in contrast to people who are quarrelsome, contentious, and troublemakers.
 - 1) *Such people stir up strife in families, communities and churches.*
 - 2) *Such people are doing the bidding of Satan.*
- d) Jesus is talking about people who:
 - 1) *Work to eliminate bitterness among their brethren;*
 - 2) *Who desire to unite men in love and goodwill.*
 - 3) *Those who desire to bring about wholeness, harmony, and good among men.*

4. What will help a person to be a "peacemaker" that Jesus is talking about in this beatitude?

- a) It is the person that has experienced the peace with God and with himself that comes from a saving relationship with God. (Rom. 5:1).
- b) Reconciliation with God helps men to be reconciled with one another (Eph. 2:13-16).
- c) Christians may have to fight against sin and error, but not fight one another.
- d) In fact, we are to put forth every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (Eph. 4:1-3).
- e) Christians are to follow after peace with all men (Heb. 12:4).
- f) We are peacemakers when we call men to God through the Gospel (Rom. 5:1).
- g) We are peacemakers when we refuse to be provoked to evil by others (Rom. 12:17-21)
- h) We are peacemakers when we strive not to offend those around us (1 Cor. 8:11-13).
- i) We are peacemakers when we are willing to forgive those who sin against us (Matt. 5:43-47).

5. What is the reward of the peacemaker?

- a) **Matt. 5:9** _____
 1) *A son shares the attributes of his Father.*
 2) *Rom. 15:13; 16:20; Heb. 13:20).*
 3) *Those who love their brethren & even their enemies are acting as God acts, and thus are rightly called "sons of God!"*
- b) **Matt. 25:21** _____

6. What about those who claim to be "sons of God," but hate their brother?

- a) **1 Jn. 3:10** _____
- b) **1 Jn. 3:14** _____

c) 1 Jn. 3:18 _____

d) 1 Jn. 4:20 _____

CONCLUSION

1. It should not be hard to see the value of being a peacemaker.
2. Such are greatly needed in our world.
3. There is no real happiness in:
 - a) Being quick to take offense;
 - b) Being eager to find fault and criticize others;
 - c) Being anxious to stir up strife;
 - d) Being a troublemaker at work, or home, or in the church.
4. Real happiness comes from:
 - a) A spirit of love, gentleness and kindness.
 - b) One who seeks a relationship first with God and then with his fellow-man.

Lesson Nine

“Blessed Are Those Who Are Persecuted for Righteousness’ sake”

INTRODUCTION

1. These beatitudes are describing beautiful attitudes of those who are able to come into the kingdom of heaven as well as attitudes of those in the kingdom.
2. This particular attitude would seem to be dealing with those who:
 - a) Want to come into the kingdom, but have to endure or deal with persecution in order to enter into it (Acts 14:22).
 - b) Or, Have come into the kingdom and are having to endure or deal with persecution in order to remain in the kingdom (1 Peter 2:20-25; 3:13-17; 4:12-19).
3. Such suffering was foretold by Jesus to His disciples:
 - a) Matt. 24:9-13 _____
 - b) John 15:18-20 _____
4. Thus, how fitting that Jesus would pronounce a blessing upon those who would have to endure persecution to continue faithful to Him.

QUESTIONS FOR CLASS DISCUSSION

1. Why do men suffer in this world?

- a) Gal. 6:7-8 _____
- b) Exo. 20:5 _____
- c) 1 Peter 4:12-16 _____

2. Is suffering persecution for righteousness’ sake always beneficial?

- a) Suffering can be good or bad—depending upon the attitude of the person.
- b) Suffering can drive some people away from God.
- c) While others are caused to turn to God.
- d) It should therefore be expected that Jesus would pronounce a blessing upon those who faithfully endure persecution for righteousness’ sake (Matt. 5:10-12; Rev. 2:10).

3. What are some obvious values of enduring persecution?

- a) Psa. 139:23-24 _____
 - 1) Peter thought he was strong (Matt. 26:31-35).
 - 2) But when tested, he found out what kind of a person he really was (Matt. 26:69-74).
 - 3) Persecution can show us what we are made of!
- b) Matt. 6:33 _____
 - 1) Suffering can help us to see what is more important in this life.
 - 2) Wealth, popularity, position, and pleasure have little value when facing death and judgment.

- c) Luke 17:17
-
- 1) *Only one returned to express thankfulness for his healing from leprosy.*
 - 2) *Suffering can help us to be thankful for the good things that we often take for granted.*
 - 3) *Such as: A loving husband or wife, respectful children, loving brothers in Christ, the physical things that make life's toils easier, the privilege of hearing the gospel, etc.*
- d) 2 Chron. 33:11-13
-
- 1) *When our health is good and we are prospering, it is easy to lose a sense of dependency upon God.*
 - 2) *King Manasseh was a wicked king, but when he came into severe distress, he saw the need of turning to God.*
 - 3) *We need to know we are fully dependant upon God for our very existence.*
 - 4) *Prayer needs to be a vital part of our life as a Christian—every day! (1 Thess. 5:17).*
- e) Matt. 7:1-5
-
- 1) *When we take time to look at our own weaknesses, it helps us to be more kind and understanding to those about us that have faults, weaknesses, and shortcomings.*
 - 2) *This is especially true when we are enduring persecution and are having to deal with such.*
- f) Eph. 4:31-32
-
- 1) *A kind word, a loving handshake or hug, or a comforting pat on the shoulder can mean much more to one enduring persecution than at any other time.*
 - 2) *Why do we have to go into the "valley of the shadow of death" in order to see the value of these actions?*
- g) 1 Peter 4:15-16
-
- 1) *Not only can suffering bring value to our lives, but God can also be glorified through our enduring suffering faithfully.*
 - 2) *We can be assured that they suffering will bring a much greater and eternal weight of glory to us as well (2 Cor. 4:17-18).*

CONCLUSION

1. ***"All who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution."*** (2 Tim. 3:12).
2. We need to be prepared for it—so we will endure faithfully to the glory of God.
3. We are reminded that if we will, great will be our reward in heaven!

Lesson Ten

“It is More Blessed to Give Than to Receive”

INTRODUCTION

1. There are many more “beatitudes” or “beautiful attitudes” in both the Old and New Testaments than these eight that Jesus gave as recorded by Matthew 5:3-12).
2. In order to finish out the quarter, we will be looking at four additional passages that pronounce a blessing upon those who do the Will of God.
3. The above beatitude is reported by the inspired Apostle Paul (Acts 20:35) as having been given by Jesus—but such is not recorded in the Gospel accounts.... ***“It is more blessed to give than to receive!”***
4. Much is said about money or possessions or giving in both the Old and New Testaments.
 - a) Probably more than most other subjects discussed.
 - b) We will have to be selective in order to keep this lesson short enough to be covered in one class period.
5. We will approach this study from several different standpoints.

QUESTIONS FOR CLASS DISCUSSION:

1. How does the principle of “sowing and reaping” apply to our giving? (Gal. 6:7-8; 2 Cor. 9:6) _____

2. With what kind of attitudes should we give?

- a) 2 Cor. 8:8, 24 _____
- b) 2 Cor. 8:13-14 _____
- c) 2 Cor. 9:1-3 _____
- d) 2 Cor. 9:5 _____
- e) 2 Cor. 9:7 _____
- f) Prov. 21:26 _____

- 1) To give with a selfish motive will not really bring a blessing.
- 2) It is the unselfish giver that is blessed.
- 3) We need to give in order to do good—to help serve the cause of righteousness.
- 4) It is strange that men will search for blessedness (happiness) in “making money” to use it selfishly; when it is obvious that selfishness has produced so much of the misery in the world.
- 5) Mankind has tried to find blessedness (happiness) in drinking, drugs, gambling, fornication, adultery, worldly power, and in higher education. But both Solomon and Jesus showed the folly of such.

g) 2 Cor. 9:11-15 _____

3. To whom and to what should we give?

- a) 1 Cor. 16:1-2 _____
- b) Matt. 19:21-22 _____
- c) Matt. 5:42 _____
- d) Eph. 4:28 _____
- e) James 1:27 _____
- f) James 2:15-17 _____
- g) Prov. 25:21-22 _____

- 1) *Giving indiscriminately may not be a blessing to the one receiving. There are other principles that need to be considered in our giving to others.*
- 2) *“If anyone will not work, neither shall he eat.” (2 Thess. 3:10).*
- 3) *“If anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.” (1 Tim. 5:8)*

4. What should be the basis of our giving?

- a) 1 Cor. 16:2 _____
- b) Luke 12:48 _____
- c) Rom. 12:8 _____
- d) 1 Cor. 13:1-3 _____
- e) Acts 3:6 _____
- f) 2 Cor. 8:1-3 _____
- g) Matt. 7:9-11 _____
- h) 2 Cor. 8:5 _____
- i) 2 Cor. 9:7 _____
- j) Acts 20:35 _____

- 1) *It should be noted that the Old Testament giving to God involved a tenth of their increase, but this is not re-given in the New Testament.*
- 2) *Each person has to read, evaluate, and determine what they will give.*
- 3) *It is often pointed out that we are under a much better covenant and therefore we should seriously consider not giving less than the Jews did.*

5. What is the reward of giving?

- a) Acts 20:35 _____
- b) Luke 6:38 _____
- c) 2 Cor. 9:6 _____
- d) 2 Cor. 9:8 _____
- e) 2 Cor. 9:10-12 _____
- f) 1 Tim. 6:18-19 _____

6. What are the dangers of possessions?

- a) Matt. 6:19 _____
- b) Matt. 6:24 _____
- c) Luke 12:21 _____

d) 1 Tim. 6:9-10 _____

e) 1 Tim. 6:17 _____

CONCLUSION

1. As long as the world stands, there will be the poor, sick, needy, homeless, and the hungry.
2. They are the Lord's avenues for our happiness and for building a wonderful bank account in heaven.
3. What a privilege to use one's talents and opportunities to make money honorably to support one's family and to have sufficient left over to help others also—as well as to help support the work of God.
4. Truly, it is more blessed to give than to receive!
5. And we have the greatest motivation of all to use what we have to the glory of God as we look to the greatest giver of All—GOD!

Lesson Eleven

“Blessed Are Those Whom God Chastens”

INTRODUCTION

1. ***“Blessed is the man whom you chasten, O Jehovah, and teach out of the law; that you may give him rest from the days of adversity...”*** (Psa. 94:12)
2. ***“Behold, happy is the man whom God corrects: therefore despise not the chastening of the Almighty.”*** (Job 5:17)
3. There is no question that God chastens people and that He does it to bless them—the Scriptures say so!
 - a) Yet, how many really believe this?
 - b) Why do we struggle so when we are chastened by God?
4. Maybe, we need to see the meaning of the word “chasten.”
 - a) It means “to instruct,” “to train up,” or “discipline.”
 - b) It involves instruction or training which corrects, molds, strengthens, or perfects the character of a person.
 - c) It involves in some instances the enforcing of obedience or order in the life of another.
 - d) Somewhat different methods of chastening may be required according to the age or development of the person being chastened.

QUESTIONS FOR CLASS DISCUSSION:

1. Why does God chasten us?

- a) It can help us to understand a little better if we would evaluate why we chasten our children—presuming that we do!
- b) Deut. 8:5-6 _____
 - 1) *It is stated that Jesus learned obedience by the things which he suffered (Heb. 5:8-9).*
 - 2) *We want our children to be obedient children, just like God wants us to be obedient children.*
 - 3) *Under the Old Law, a stubborn and rebellious son that would not learn obedience to his parents by way of chastening was to be stoned to death (Deut. 21:18-21).*
 - 4) *This shows clearly that obedience is very important before God.*
- c) Heb. 12:5-6 _____
 - 1) *God does not chasten us because he hates us....but rather because of His concern for our welfare physically and spiritually.*
 - 2) *The same should be true of parents (Prov. 6:20-24).*
 - 3) *In fact, the wise man says that we hate our children if we do not chasten them when needed (Prov. 13:24).*
- d) Prov. 19:18 _____

- e) Prov. 22:6 _____
 1) *The wise man says that foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child—so he needs chastening (instruction, training) to live wisely, not foolishly (Prov. 22:15).*
 2) *It is a wise son who will listen to the instruction of his parents (Prov. 13:1).*
 3) *We show our wisdom by profiting from God's chastening of us!*
- f) Prov. 23:13 _____
 1) *If we don't instruct our children, the world will—in the wrong direction!*
 2) *If we want our children to escape the punishment of hell, we need to chasten them correctly.*
- g) Prov. 29:15 _____
 1) *An untrained (undisciplined) child can bring shame to its parents.*
 2) *But a disciplined child will give its parents rest and delight (Prov. 29:17).*
- h) Heb. 12:7-8 _____
 1) *Chastening can be an indication that we are legitimate children of God.*
 2) *Loving parents have a concern for their children.*
- i) Heb. 12:10-11 _____

2. How does God chasten us?

- a) Psa. 6:1 _____
 1) *This is an important lesson for parents to remember!*
- b) John 6:44-45 _____
 1) *Chastening is a teaching process.*
 2) *God teaches us by His Word (Psa. 19:7-11).*
 3) *Hopefully, He restrains us from practicing evil (Psa. 19:12-13).*
- c) Psa. 118:18 _____
- d) 1 Cor. 5:4-5 _____
 1) *The church becomes God tool in administering chastening to the unrepentant.*
 2) *The purpose is obvious to save the soul...and to protest the righteous.*
 3) *Also, the reputation of the church must be guarded.*
- e) 2 Cor. 12:7-10 _____
 1) *Paul learned many good lessons from God's chastening*

CONCLUSION

1. God chastens His people because He loves us.
2. He has many ways by which this can be done—we may not see or understand what they are at first.
3. But they are all for our good.
4. God chastens us—but let's not read into events more than what the Scriptures say.
5. Thank God that He loves us enough to chasten us!

Lesson Twelve

“Blessed Are Those Who Walk Not in the Counsel of the Ungodly”

INTRODUCTION

1. We want to go back to the Psalms to pick up one of the “beatitudes” in the Bible. (Psa. 1)
2. Our title of this lesson only picks up one of the attributes of the man that is blessed by God.
 - a) The Psalm deals with both the positive, as well as the negative aspects of this blessed man’s walk and attitudes.
 - b) His walk and attitudes are clearly revealed to us and even illustrated.
3. As this man is described, we can easily see why he is called “Blessed.”

QUESTIONS FOR CLASS DISCUSSION:

1. What is the five-fold character of this blessed man?

a) Psa. 1:1

- 1) *A key word here is “walk!”*
- 2) *This is usually identified with the manner of a person life (1 Jn. 1:6-7).*
- 3) *It makes it very clear that he does not listen to the foolishness of the ungodly, but to the wisdom of God (Prov. 2:6).*
- 4) *His life is not dictated nor planned by what men advocate, but by what God advocates (1 Cor. 2:4-8; Psa. 119:24).*
- 5) *The prophet Jeremiah calls on man to see the difference (Jer. 10:23).*
- 6) *A man would be foolish indeed not to take counsel from God as to how he should walk in this life (Prov. 3:5).*

b) Psa. 1:1

- 1) *The key word here is “stands!”*
- 2) *He not only does not walk with them, nor does he stand with them in the way they travel (Matt. 7:13-14).*
- 3) *He does not want to be associated with them.*

c) Psa. 1:1

- 1) *The important word here is “sits!”*
- 2) *He does not take up “residence” with them to plot their evil ways.*
- 3) *A scorner is one who mocks, scoffs, derides, and ridicules things that are sacred, holy, and things that are right.*
- 4) *He turns such into objects of contempt and scorn.*
- 5) *God scorns the scorners (Prov. 3:34).*
- 6) *Notice the progressiveness of going into sin: Walking, Standing, and then Sitting.*

d) Psa. 1:2

- 1) *The key word here is “delight!”*
- 2) *And, of course, what he takes delight in—The Law of the Lord!*

- 3) *The emphasis upon this delight (Psa. 112:1; 119:35; Rom. 7:22).*
- 4) *In order to intelligently delight in God's Law, we must come to know it inside and out—in all its beauty and value! (Psa. 119:72, 127, 103).*

e) Psa. 1:2

- 1) *The key word here is "meditate!"*
- 2) *It is continual meditation upon the Law of God—day and night!*
- 3) *Psa. 119:97 repeats the idea above.*
- 4) *Look at Paul's admonition to Timothy (1 Tim. 4:15).*
- 5) *To meditate is to think upon, understand how it applies to my life and put it into practice.*
- 6) *Of what value is knowledge, if not put into action?*

2. In what ways is this man blessed?

a) Psa. 1:3

- 1) *To be planted is to be established—to be steadfast—rooted (Col. 2:6-6-9).*
- 2) *The blessed man is steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord (1 Cor. 15:58).*
- 3) *He is not like children—tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting (Eph. 4:14)*
- 4) *He is a man of steadfast convictions and unwavering loyalty.*

b) Psa. 1:3

- 1) *He is fruitful as a tree should be!*
- 2) *He abides in Jesus and Jesus abides in him which causes him to bear much fruit (John 15:5).*
- 3) *God's people must bear fruit or be cut off (John 15:6).*
- 4) *We need to be fruitful in every good work (Col. 1:10).*
- 5) *In being fruitful, we glorify God (John 15:8).*

c) Psa. 1:3

- 1) *When we do the will of God, keep His commandments, we will prosper.*
- 2) *The Apostle John prayed that God's people who were walking in truth would prosper, be in good health, and spiritual prosper (3 John 2-3).*
- 3) *God promises care over His people (Matt. 6:33).*

3. What is the ultimate blessedness of this man?

a) Psa. 1:4-6

- 1) *A day of accounting is coming for all men (Heb. 9:27).*
- 2) *There is no way that the ungodly, the scorners, or sinners will be able to stand in judgment!*
- 3) *They will not be able to be before God with confidence!*
- 4) *They will experience the great realization—"I AM UNPREPARED TO MEET GOD IN JUDGMENT!"*
- 5) *But the righteous man is prepared.*

6) *It is not a day of doom, but a day of destiny—eternal destiny (blessedness)!*

CONCLUSION

1. Why not become this blessed man!
2. Why not emulate his character, actions, and attitudes!
3. The rewards are great—not only here, but for all eternity!

Lesson Thirteen

“Blessed Are They Who Die in the Lord”

INTRODUCTION

1. A fitting final “beatitude” in this series would have to be Revelation 14:13!
2. Jesus has already pronounced a blessing upon those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake (Matt. 5:10-12).
3. A special emphasis is given to such in the Revelation letter also.
 - a) Chapters 12 and 13 give a grim picture of what the church had to look forward to in its future existence—persecution!
 - b) Its enemies are pictured as gruesome and awful.
 - c) But in spite of such terrible opposition the church will face, and the terrible deaths of so many faithful souls that will happen, there is a special blessing to all who “die in the Lord!”
 - d) Out of great sorrow will come great blessings!
4. Chapter 14 of Revelation is designed to give encouragement, strength, and consolation to those who were going to be facing these terrible enemies of righteousness.
5. The following seven things were given as a source of encouragement:
 - a) Jesus, as the Lamb of God, is shown with the 144,000 (and later—a great multitude) of redeemed people in the presence of God and giving glory and honor to God.
 - b) That the Gospel Message would be preached to the whole world so that all will have an opportunity to respond.
 - c) By giving assurance that the great persecutor of God’s people would be overthrown and shown up for what he really was.
 - d) By giving assurance of God’s wrath to be poured out upon those enemies of His people.
 - e) Emphasis upon the blessedness of those who die in the Lord.
 - f) Revealing the ultimate and final overthrow of the enemies of God’s people.
 - g) By giving a glimpse of what their reward would be like.

QUESTIONS FOR CLASS DISCUSSION:

1. What three reasons are given why these people will be blessed by God?

a) Rev. 14:13

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- 1) *They died in the Lord in contrast to dying outside of Christ!*
 - 2) *Salvation is only found in Christ! (1 John 5:11)*
 - 3) *These may have died a violent death, but they died in the Lord—in a state of salvation in Christ.*
 - 4) *For that reason they are pictured in Chapter 12 as overcoming the old dragon by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony—and that they did not love their lives to the death!*

b) Rev. 14:13

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- 1) *We all appreciate and need rest after the grueling activities of life.*
 - 2) *Rest signifies the ceasing of the activity—whatever it may be.*
 - 3) *Rest gives us a chance to recuperate from the daily toils of life.*
 - 4) *But to those who have faithfully served God and come to the end of their journey, they will not have to experience the terribleness again of what men may have done to them.*
 - 5) *Matt. 11:29-30*

c) Rev. 14:13

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- 1) *Their works, labors, toils for Christ will follow them into judgment.*
 - 2) *We will be judged by our works (Rev. 20:12).*
 - 3) *But our works are the kind that bring glory to God—and will thus bring glory, blessings to us!*

2. What are some valuable lessons to be learned from this “beatitude?”

- a) God’s people can expect persecution for righteousness’ sake!**
- b) There will be terrible things to be faced at times because we are a Christian!**
- c) That we absolutely want to be among those who “die in the Lord!”**
- d) That Christians are not promised an easy way into heaven!**
- e) That only those who labor in the Lord will have promise of rest—the unbelieving and wicked will not!**
- f) That faithful people of God will be greatly rewarded.**

CONCLUSION

1. Correct attitudes toward God and our fellow-man will help to bring about correct actions.
2. Correct attitudes are beautiful attitudes—to be held up, admired, and emulated!
3. That correct attitudes are necessary to not only enter the kingdom, but to remain faithful in the kingdom, and to be accepted in the judgment.

